

DUAL PURPOSE AND THEIR ROLE

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It is a real privilege and a pleasure for me to have a small part in this great Shorthorn event, our 1980 World Congress in Calgary, Canada.

As President of the Canadian Dual Purpose Shorthorn Society, I wish to welcome all of you to our Country and our Congress--and a special welcome to Dairy Shorthorn, Milking Shorthorn, Dual Purpose Shorthorn and Illawarra Breeders. We want you to enjoy your visit and hope many of you will be able to see a lot of our Country. I know I speak for all our Breeders when I say, we will do everything possible to assist you in any way we can.

I would like to take a few minutes to speak about the role our Breed plays here in Canada, as I see it. We have quite a large country, so we have quite a variation in climate, soil conditions, crops grown, etc., so our Breeds role must vary. Here in the West, we are noted for our beef industry. The part Dual Purpose plays here, has been mainly with the beef side of our Breed. In recent years, because of consumer demands and a period of low beef prices, our beef breed underwent a change of type. This new type calling for a larger framed, leaner carcassed animal. I believe our breed was, and is, capable of filling this need, in a crossbreeding programme. Supplying the larger frame and extra milk for greater weaning weights on our calves. Let me be quick to state that not all our Dual Purpose cattle would be capable of fulfilling this role, and that some cattle were used that did not do a satisfactory job. However, it is my belief that much more use could have been made of our cattle, especially in some areas of the Country.

Then as we move eastward to the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, we find our role changing to the Dual role we have been striving to preserve since Dual Purpose Cattle came to Canada about a century ago.

This is the area of Canada where most of our Cattle are located. Here we have some very fine herds of Cattle, being tested for milk production and some on beef test as well. Our cattle are comparing quite favourably with the straight beef breeds in the test stations. Quite a number of Dual Cattle have gone into beef Shorthorns herds and some have been shown at major exhibitions and stood well up in their classes. We also have some herds of Dual Purpose Shorthorns used in cow-calf operations, as well as the crossbreeding programme.

Moving to the extreme eastern part of our Country, to the smallest province, Prince Edward Island, we find our breed again quite popular with several purebred herds being kept for milk production, and again others being tested for beef as well. Here on some of our smaller farms, we find Dual Purpose cows used to suckle calves, raising as many as 8 or 10 per cow per year. This then is a brief outline of the role our breed has played and is playing in Canada.

I believe we Dual Purpose Breeders here in Canada are guilty of complacency. We are not reaching the full potential our breed is capable of, especially in the dairy end of our breed. Perhaps we are being overly cautious, believing we may lose some of our beef qualities.

I think we can achieve greater success, if we work more closely with other countries, by the use of A.I. testing, etc. I ask you all to help each other, and this way we will help ourselves to greater success and make our breed greater.

